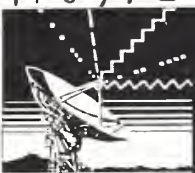


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Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • Washington, DC 20250-1300

Letter No. 2763

May 3, 1996

EMERGENCY GRAZING APPROVED -- While visiting the Texas Panhandle area to evaluate drought conditions (April 26), Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman announced additional relief measures for producers approved for emergency grazing on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage. The new payment reduction will be five percent for each month or any part of a month that the emergency grazing authority is used. But, the payment reduction cannot exceed the 25 percent payment reduction previously assessed. This new payment reduction provides more flexibility to producers because they can determine the number of months the livestock graze the CRP acreage. Glickman's decision is in response to the continued severe drought plaguing the Southwest and concern that the CRP repayment reduction may be too severe considering the quality of cover on CRP acreage. Farm Service Agency State Committees will evaluate weather conditions in their states to determine whether the emergency grazing provisions should continue. When the emergency situation no longer exists (not to exceed October 1, 1996), the emergency grazing authority will expire. **Contact: Dann Stuart (202) 690-0474.**

COMMODITY PAYMENT RATES ANNOUNCED -- Estimated Production Flexibility Contract payment rates for fiscal years 1996 through 2002 for wheat, feed grains, upland cotton and rice have been announced by Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman. The contract rates reflect potential payments to owners and producers who enroll their farms in a 7-year Production Flexibility Contract. Final annual payments will be made to producers with contracts no later than September 30, for each of fiscal years 1996-2002 payments. When final 1996 payments are made, participating producers of wheat, barley, oats and upland cotton will receive an additional payment, based on the amount of the 1995 deficiency payments required to be repaid. Also, participating producers of these commodities who have not repaid their unearned 1995-crop deficiency payments will have the amount due deducted from their final 1996 payments. These overpayments occurred because advance payments for the 1995 crops must be repaid since market prices have increased above the respective established (target) prices. **Contact: Dann Stuart (202) 690-0474.**

REGULATORY REFORM PROPOSALS ISSUED -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced (May 1) two reform proposals as part of its ongoing effort to improve food safety and modernize meat and poultry inspection. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said, "These proposals reflect our strategy to shift from a prescriptive command and control system of regulation that can stifle innovation to one that provides greater flexibility and responsibility to industry to produce safe products for consumers." One regulatory revision being proposed would establish objective performance standards for the safe production of cooked beef products, uncured meat patties and certain fully and partially cooked poultry products. The second proposed rule would eliminate requirements for industry to obtain prior approval from FSIS for facility blueprints and equipment and for most quality control programs. The proposed rules were published in the May 2 Federal Register. **Contact: Jacque Knight (202) 720-9113.**

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ROLES CLARIFIED FOR NEW CONSERVATION PROGRAMS -- Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman clarified (April 26) the roles of the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in the administration of the new conservation programs created by the 1996 Farm Bill. Glickman designated the NRCS as having primary responsibility for setting conservation policy for new programs, in particular, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. He reaffirmed FSA as the lead agency in the administration of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). He also directed NRCS and FSA jointly to develop a system utilizing to the fullest extent their networks of state, county and local officials to assist in program delivery. **Contact: Johna Pierce (202) 720-4623.**

MARKETING ASSISTANCE LOAN RATES ANNOUNCED -- Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said (April 26) that the U.S. Department of Agriculture would offer nonrecourse marketing assistance loans to producers with production flexibility contracts for the 1996 crops of wheat, feed grains, rice and upland cotton and to any producers of soybeans, minor oilseeds, (sunflower seed, canola, rapeseed, safflower, mustard seed, flaxseed) and ELS cotton. Both marketing loan and loan deficiency payments will be implemented for 1996 crops as they were for 1995 crops. Producers of ELS cotton are not eligible for either marketing loans or loan deficiency payments under the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996. However, ELS cotton loans continue to be nonrecourse, allowing the producer to forfeit the commodity to USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation as full satisfaction of the loan if market prices are below principal plus interest. Marketing assistance loan rates for all commodities (except rice) may differ from year to year. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

MEAT AND POULTRY HACCP ALLIANCE GETS USDA CONTRACT -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced (April 26) it has awarded a contract to the International Meat and Poultry HACCP Alliance. Under the contract, the organization will develop model plans to help implement the system of food safety controls known as HACCP, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point. FSIS requested the development of ten generic models that could be used to assist meat and poultry plants in implementing new food safety rules which are based on HACCP. These models will address operations such as beef, pork and poultry slaughter as well as cooked ready-to-eat products. The \$207,000 bid by the Alliance, a Texas A & M University foundation, was one of five submitted to FSIS. **Contact: Jacque Knight (202) 720-9113.**

FOOD STAMP RULE TO ENFORCE WORK REQUIREMENTS -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture published new regulations (April 30) that impose tougher sanctions on people who refuse to work or who break the rules of federal, state and local assistance programs. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said, "The regulations issued will end a system where one government agency sanctions people and another increases their benefits. It helps move people from welfare to work, and puts an end to a system that rewards individuals on Food Stamps and other programs for not participating in the job programs and other requirements. This rule gives States the tools they need to impose tougher sanctions on people who refuse to work." The final rule was published in the April 30 Federal Register and will become effective in 30 days. **Contact: Alicia Bambara (703) 305-2039.**

EDITED BY LESLIE PARKER

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #2031 -- Americans have a love affair with fresh cut flowers in their homes. However, more and more of those flowers are coming from outside the United States. Gary Crawford has this story. **(Weekly cassette -- five minute documentary).**

CONSUMER TIME #1508 -- A break on fresh vegetable prices. Will a nutrient help you to lose weight? The great Mother's Day flower invasion. A nutrient that helps diabetics. Get to know your good bugs. **(Weekly cassette -- consumer features).**

AGRITAPE #2022 -- USDA announces 1996 Farm Program payment rates. A quick look at the new crop payment rates from USDA. U.S. requests WTO action on beef ban. Agricultural trade surplus still growing. Holding onto your crop insurance? Emergency help for cattle producers. **(Weekly cassette -- news features).**

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Monday, May 13, feed outlook, oil crops outlook, rice outlook, wheat outlook, cattle and sheep outlook, world agricultural production, world grain trade and world oilseed trade. Tuesday, May 14, farm labor report and weekly weather and crop outlook. Friday, May 17, poultry outlook and cattle on feed report. **These are USDA reports we know about in advance. Our newslines carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup.**

**USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545**

Material changed at 5:00 p.m., ET, each working day and 10:30 a.m. on crop report days.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

FEATURES: Patrick O'Leary reports on government help for cattle producers, announced this week at the White House.

ACTUALITIES: Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman comments on drought conditions in Texas and Kansas as well as government help for cattle producers. USDA Farm Service Agency official Parks Shackelford describes grazing allowance on Conservation Reserve Program acres. USDA Under Secretary Ellen Haas describes "Operation Trident," a food stamp fraud sweep in Tidewater, Virginia, Jacksonville, Florida and Seattle, Washington.

****NEW SATELLITE COORDINATES:** Effective May 2-September 26, the satellite newsfeed coordinates are: Telstar 402R (89 degrees West), Transponder 20, Horizontal Polarity, Downlink Frequency 4100 MHz.

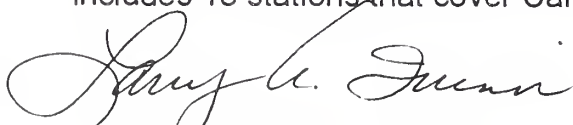
Comments and suggestions are welcome regarding USDA broadcast services. Call Larry Quinn, (202)720-6072, or write to: Room 1618-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250-1300. Internet E-mail: LQuinn@USDA.GOV.

OFF MIKE

NO RAIN, HIGH WINDS AND DUST...continue to describe conditions in the Texas Panhandle, reports **Larry DeSha** (KGNC, Amarillo, TX). Only 1.11 inches of rain has fallen in Amarillo since October 1, but Dalhart (at the top of the Panhandle) had its last rain in September. **Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman** was there to inspect the agricultural situation last Friday. Conditions are the worst Larry's seen in his 10 years at KGNC. Old-timers say if it weren't for the Conservation Reserve Program and the land now planted to grass, they would be experiencing Dust Bowl conditions. As it is, they've had five or six dust storms with 50-60 mph winds. Seventy-five percent of the Texas wheat crop is in poor to very poor condition, but in the Panhandle, Larry says 90 percent is in very poor shape. "It's an exciting time to be a farm broadcaster," he said. Listeners are anxious for the latest word on market prices, weather and government announcements.

CATTLE PRICES...continue to create tight margins for livestock producers who are paying record prices for feed, reports **Tom Riter** (KFKA, Greeley, CO). Corn, barley and seeded onions are being planted there with expectations up for corn acreage this year. KFKA is celebrating its 75th Anniversary on May 21. In the early years, market reports were prepared by a reporter riding the rails to Denver and back in time for a noon report. In his fifth year at KFKA, Tom earned the Outstanding Media Support Award this year from his local soil conservation district.

KARNAL BUNT...is affecting a well-developed international market that Arizona producers had for their durum wheat, reports **George Gatley** (Western Agri-Radio Network, Yuma, AZ). Seventy wheat fields in California's Imperial Valley and fields in the Yuma area have found to be clean, he said. Arizona's pasta wheat has been finding good markets in Italy. After 18 years, an agricultural TV program that George hosted has gone off the air, but he continues his radio network which includes 18 stations that cover California and Arizona.



LARRY A. QUINN, Director
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